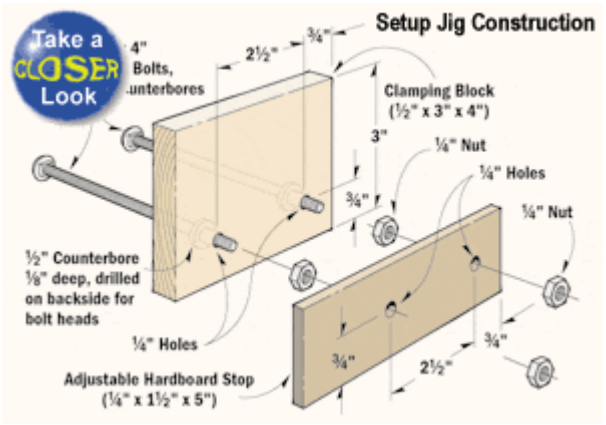
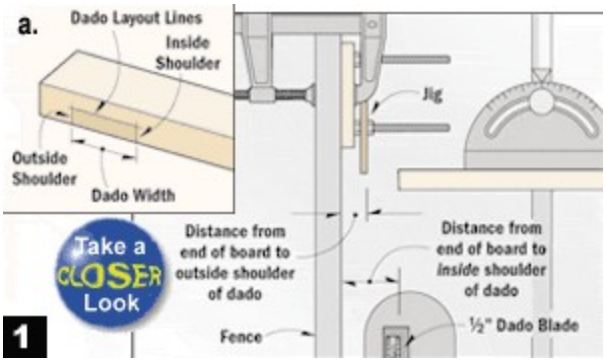
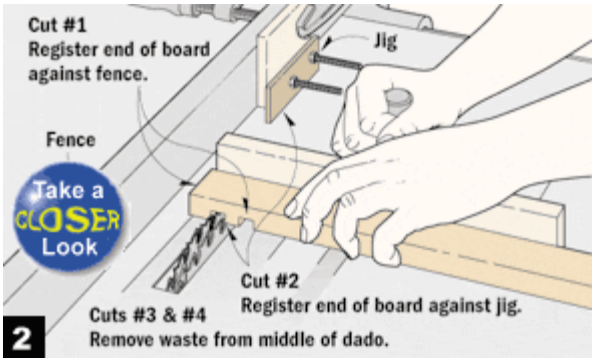
Dado Setup Jig

Whenever you need to make a series of matching dadoes for a project, the most important part of the process is aligning the two shoulder cuts of the dadoes accurately to the blade. Here's a simple jig you can build to help make this job a lot more accurate.

The jig is just a small adjustable hardboard stop attached to a taller hardwood clamping block using carriage bolts and nuts (see *Setup Jig Construction*). By adjusting the nuts, you can move the stop in or out to register the cut for the inside shoulder without having to reset the fence between cuts.

Setting up the jig is fairly simple. First clamp the jig to your fence *(Fig. 1)*. Then mark the dado locations on the workpiece *(Detail a)* and position it against your fence so that the dado blade aligns perfectly with the *inside* shoulder of the dado *(Figs. 1 and 1a)*. Now, before making any cuts, reposition the workpiece and adjust the hardboard stop so that it aligns perfectly with the *outside* shoulder of the dado.



Once the jig is set up, you're ready to put it into action. Make the first cut with the end of your board butted against the fence to define the *inside* shoulder of the dado.

To make the second cut, slide the board away from the blade and butt the same end against the hardboard stop. This defines the *outside* shoulder of the dado. To complete the dado, simply clear away the waste between the two shoulder cuts.